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THE JOHN JAY DINNER

THE UNION LEAGUE CLUB

JUNE 24, 1887

THE

UNION LEAGUE CLUB DINNER

GIVEN TO THE

HON. JOHN JAY

BY MEMBERS OF THE UNION LEAGUE CLUB

ON THE OCCASION OF HIS SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY

JUNE 24, 1887

NEW YORK
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New York, June 1st, 1887.

Dear Mr. Jay:

As personal friends of many years we desire to congratulate you upon the near arrival of your seventieth birthday, and, that we may have an opportunity to make manifest our esteem and affection, and our high appreciation of your long and honorable career, we invite you to meet us at dinner at the Union League Club, on some evening that you may name, as near to your birthday as your convenience will permit, to celebrate this happy anniversary.

To Hon. John Jay.

JOSEPH H. CHOATE,
LE GRAND B. CANNON,
J. J. ASTOR,
THOMAS HILLHOUSE,
GEORGE JONES,
CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW,
DORMAN B. EATON,
WHITELAW REID,
AUGUSTINE SMITH,
WM. DOWD,
JOHN A. STEWART,
GEORGE BLISS,
ALBON P. MAN,
W. E. DODGE,
WM. M. EVARTS,
C. R. AGNEW,
JAMES C. CARTER,
JACKSON S. SCHULTZ,
THOS. C. ACTON,
B. H. BRISTOW,
RICHARD BUTLER,
CORNELIUS N. BLISS,
F. D. TAPPEN,
LEVI P. MORTON,
E. H. PERKINS, Jr.,
JESSE SELIGMAN,
SALEM H. WALES,
ELIHU ROOT,

JOHN L. CADWALADER,
NOAH DAVIS,
J. W. GODDARD,
ISAAC T. SMITH,
SIGOURNEY W. FAY,
WATSON E. CASE,
I. N. PHELPS,
W. Q. RIDDLE,
JOEL B. ERHARDT,
A. VAN SANTVOORD,
THOMAS DENNY,
JACOB WENDELL,
HENRY E. HOWLAND,
ALEX. McL. AGNEW,
SAMUEL P. AVERY,
FRANCIS H. LEGGETT,
HENRY H. BRIDGMAN,
JOSEPH E. GAY,
CHARLES BUTLER,
JAMES H. DUNHAM,
L. G. WOODHOUSE,
HENRY CLEWS,
WM. F. BUCKLEY,
HORACE WHITE,
WM. WALTER PHELPS,
WM. ALLEN BUTLER,
M. C. D. BORDEN,
CHARLES S. SMITH,
CHARLES G. LANDON,
BIRDSEYE BLAKEMAN,
WM. D. SLOANE,
WM. P. ST. JOHN,
H. HOAGLAND,
CHAS. E. WHITEHEAD,
EDWARD F. BROWN,
J. D. VERMILYE,
CHAS. E. BEEBE,
THOS. H. HUBBARD,
CHARLES A. PEABODY,
D. F. APPLETON,
WILLIAM HENRY LEE,
ROBBINS LITTLE,
DANIEL G. ROLLINS,
F. A. POTTS,
CYRUS BUTLER,
JOSEPH W. HOWE,
J. M. REQUA,
WALTER HOWE,
H. L. KENDRICK,
GEORGE M. LEFFERTS,
VINCENZO BOTTA,
GEORGE F. BAKER,
JAMES OTIS,
GEO. G. HAVEN,
JOHN H. HALL,
HIRAM W. HUNT,
BENJAMIN P. DAVIS,
THOS. H. WOOD,
JAMES D. HAGUE,
JOHN H. HINTON,
CHAS. C. BEAMAN,
GRANVILLE P. HAWES,
GEORGE MONTAGUE,
RICHARD P. HERRICK,
EDWARD MITCHELL,
EDWARD H. AMMIDOWN,
JOHN J. McCOOK,
FREDERIC B. ELLIOTT,
JOHN B. CORNELL,
CHAS. E. BUTLER,
W. H. DRAPER,
ISAAC H. BAILEY,

WM. H. WEBB,
M. W. COOPER,
W. HART SMITH,
J. W. DOWLING,
JOSEPH H. BROWN,
HORACE PORTER,
BENJ. BREWSTER,
THOMAS L. JAMES,
LUTHER R. MARSH,
J. M. BUNDY,
LOCKE W. WINCHESTER,
ALBERT REMICK,
BRAYTON IVES,
LUCIUS H. SMITH,
A. G. AGNEW,
JOHN W. AITKEN,
JOHN K. CILLEY.

[REPLY.]

The Honorable Joseph H. Choate, William M. Evarts, Dr. C. R. Agnew, Le Grand B. Cannon, and the other signers.

DEAR SIRS:

I pray you to accept my sincere thanks for the most kind letter with which you have honored me, dated the first of June, and which I have received to-day.

As personal friends of many years you congratulate me upon the near arrival of my seventieth birthday, and that you may have an opportunity, as you say in gentle words to whose significance I am not insensible, to make manifest your esteem and affection and your approval of my career, you ask me to meet you at dinner at the Union League Club, on some evening that I may name as near to my birthday as may be convenient.

The familiar names, more than one hundred, attached to your letter, recall memories that embrace times before the beginning of our historic Club,

names honored by the country, and which lend dignity and weight to your friendly tribute.

I frankly accept the invitation so gracefully and cordially tendered, and as my birthday falls on Thursday, the 23d of June, I will, in accordance with your request, name the evening of the 24th.

I am, gentlemen, with sincere regards and grateful acknowledgments,

Faithfully yours,

JOHN JAY.

Bedford House,
Katonah, New York,
June 11, 1887.

Invited Guests.

Rt. Rev. HENRY C. POTTER, D.D.,
Bishop of New York.

Rt. Rev. ARTHUR CLEVELAND COXE, D.D.,
Bishop of Western New York.

Hon. GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

Rev. LEA LUQUER.

Rev. WM. S. RAINSFORD, D.D.

Dr. JOHN HENRY HOBART.

E. RANDOLPH ROBINSON.

WM. H. SCHIEFFELIN.

WILLIAM JAY.

HENRY G. CHAPMAN.

Menu.

Little Neck clams	HAUT BARSAC
Consommé aux étoiles Américaine Green turtle, clear	AMONTILLADO SUPERIOR
Bouchées au bons vivants	
Salmon de Kennebec, sauce Hollandaise White-bait à l'Anglaise Concombres panaché	LIEBFRAUMILCH
Lamb chops pane, au Maréchal Spring chicken grillée, maître d'hôtel Bermuda potatoes, châteaux Long Island green peas	MOUTON ROTHSCHILD
Sweet-breads, braisé aux truffles Frog legs à l'Union League Jardinière of spring vegetables	ROEDERER GRAND SEC
Hot and cold asparagus	VEUVE CLICQUOT YELLOW LABEL
PUNCH EN SURPRISE	PERRIER JOUET
Grass plovers sur canapé and English snipe au cresson Lettuce and tomato salad	
Nougats pyramides Ruches à miel Glaces de fantaisies Fraises Gelée décoré	CÔTE ROTIE
Gâteaux Mottoes Fruits	
Café	LIQUEURS

THE FOLLOWING IS A REPORT OF THE ADDRESS MADE AT A DINNER GIVEN IN HONOR OF HON. JOHN JAY, AT THE UNION LEAGUE CLUB, NEW YORK, FRIDAY, JUNE 24, 1887.

Mr. Choate (in the Chair):—Gentlemen: Over looking many a better man, my associates on the Committee have compelled me, in obedience to the kind suggestion of Mr. Jay, to occupy the Chair this evening. These walls have looked down on many a festive banquet, but I believe never upon such a genuine love-feast as this. [Applause] We have assembled to-night to celebrate the seventieth birthday of an honest man. [Applause] It was Washington, I believe, who, after achieving higher honors and more enduring titles than ever fell to the lot of any American, expressed the hope that he might always have the firmness and the virtue to deserve what he considered the highest distinction to which human nature could attain,—the character of an honest man. [Applause]

I am no master of the language of flattery, and

I do not propose to use it on this occasion; but as I have had the honor to propose this tribute of friendship, I may perhaps be permitted, on your behalf, to say to our distinguished guest, that he owes it, not so much to the fact, that he has attained the limit of threescore years and ten, honorable as that distinction is. Other men have done that without receiving such a reward as this. He owes it not altogether to the exalted position that he has always occupied, or to the excellent public service that he has been able to render; but he owes it first and foremost, to the love we all bear him. [Great applause] It is a tribute to that warm heart and that cheerful temper which has always commanded the admiration and affection of his associates, no matter how spirited the controversies, in which he was never slow to take an active part. [Applause] There is hardly a gentleman within the sound of my voice, I suppose, who cannot recall and acknowledge with pleasant memory many a kind word and act, many a courteous attention that he has received from the hands of Mr. Jay. For myself I may say that when I came to this city, an absolutely homeless stranger, thirty-two years ago, he welcomed me, for no reason that I could discover, but the warmth of his own heart, to his own hospitable home, the Jay mansion at Bedford, rich with the traditions of his historic race; and at his fireside,

and by his table, I enjoyed many of the happiest hours of my youth. And I have no doubt that many a gentleman here can recall many a similar act of kindness and courtesy received at his hands. And so with gratitude and affection we congratulate him upon his honorable life. We express our hearty sympathy with him in the almost royal jubilee of his golden wedding; and we extend to him here to-night, the right hand of fellowship. [Great applause] As the Chairman on such an occasion as this is nothing if not personal, I may be permitted further to refer to that spotless purity of life, which is the richest possession that any man can attain, in the light of which all the glitter of wealth and all the glories of office fade wretchedly away. When I read in my boyhood that matchless tribute that Daniel Webster paid to the Chief Justice, when he said that "the spotless ermine of the judicial robe touched nothing less spotless than itself when it fell upon the shoulders of John Jay," —[great applause]—when I read that, I supposed that it was a personal tribute to a personal and individual trait in that great historic American; but when I came to know these Jays of later time, I discovered that it was only the regular family trait exhibited in the noble person of the sire, and which, according to the true law of heredity, has been transmitted

with the Jay homestead in the regular line of family descent. [Laughter and applause] Why, some of us have known five of these generations: some by repute and tradition, and some by personal contact and acquaintance; and never once have we known that shining talent to fail. How strong and how true then must the strain have been in this our honored guest, in his heart and his loins to enable him to transmit it to his descendants as pure as he received it from his sire. [Applause]

While the time for this occasion has been happily chosen, (for when a man reaches seventy all his faults as well as all his virtue have certainly been found out,) this place where we are gathered is also the only place where it could have been properly celebrated. [Applause] As one of the founders of this historic Club; as its President for a longer period of years than any other incumbent of the office; as the unswerving champion of its principles, and the promotor of its dignity and its usefulness, his life for the last twenty-five years has been among its happiest traditions. And when you look upon the eventful period of his administration, comparing it with all that went before and after, I think we may fairly say, at least those of us who have enjoyed the same distinction after him, that however faithfully we have tried to follow in his

footsteps, the administration of each one of his successors has only tended by the contrast to make his shine all the brighter and the stronger. [Applause]

You will hardly expect me to review all the public services which our distinguished guest has been able to render; but I think in all modesty it may be said that he always, whatever might be the consequences, has been true to his own convictions, and has always lived up to his light. [Applause] His service has been an unselfish service, and he has never sought office or honor as a reward for what he has been able to do. [Applause] When I first made his acquaintance he was of the age of thirty-eight, active at the Bar, and the well-known and much-abused counsel of the Underground Railroad. [Laughter] Now, railroad lawyers, as you know, have always been subjects, more or less, of suspicion and abuse. [Laughter] But I believe that no one of them in all history ever suffered the obloquy which fell upon Mr. Jay for his self-sacrificing devotion to that mysterious client of his. [Laughter] His fees, too, I fear, in that splendid service, were quite inadequate when compared with the compensation which other railroads pay. [Laughter] Our friend, Mr. Depew, will correct me if I am wrong. [Laughter] But I think they were miserably small in comparison with what other railroads have sometimes in later times

been compelled to pay. [Laughter] But the verdict of history has transmuted all that abuse and ignominy into lasting honor and glory. [Applause] To have stood forward as the champion of the downtrodden fugitive slave; to have borne with silent submission the contempt of a depraved public opinion, the abuse of a corrupted press, and even the cruelties of the law itself; yes, to have courted even social ostracism among his own friends rather than to abate one jot of the service that his conscience told him that he owed to the poor negro, this itself is eulogy to-day. [Great applause]

Then came the war; and in this presence I need not say how well he acted his part; how he wielded the united influence of this Club always to maintain that principle of unconditional loyalty on which it was founded, which was its motto and its watchword. Standing thus in the midst of an almost hostile city, we may modestly say that it did render some service to the Government in the days of peril; and I know of no one man who is entitled to so large a share of that common glory as he who sits by my side. [Applause] It is true, gentlemen, that some of Mr. Jay's highest titles to honor and distinction have come out of attempts that have been made to brand him for doing his duty in the face of an unjust public opinion; and even in the

Church, of which he has ever been a loyal son, when he vindicated the rights of the colored churches to a representation and a vote, according to their strength and their numbers, even there he lost caste. I will not detain you by dwelling on what may seem to be mere flattery to him. It is merely telling the truth in regard to his exertions. Why, look at it in these later days, when Mr. Jay has enjoyed the extreme felicity of being able, without severing any of the precious associations of his previous life, to join hands with honest men of all parties and all factions in fighting that subtle and insidious foe that has been sapping at the root of our free institutions; I mean to say corruption and incompetence in office. [Applause] And to-day, as the President of the Civil-Service Reform Association of the State of New York, he is daily demonstrating that in spite of all that is said to the contrary, it is still even possible to be a steadfast Republican and an honest reformer at the same time. [Laughter and applause] He has demonstrated, too, that the private station is the post of honor, and that a patriotic citizen seeking nothing for himself can render real service every year and every month to his country. And if I were called on to point out to my sons the type of citizen best worthy of imitation on their part, I should pass over all the great generals, all the great magistrates,

all the great public officials, whose places are so largely filled by accident, and point them to the private citizen who was ever ready to render service in any good cause; to promote any needed reform; and who, seeking and taking nothing for himself, yielded every thing to the public good. [Great applause]

And so, gentlemen, in your names I congratulate our distinguished guest, that his seventy years find him still having a sound mind and a warm heart and a cheerful temper, in a sound body; and find him, too,

> "Possessed of all that should accompany old age,
> As honor, love, obedience, troops of friends."

And so, in your name I welcome him, and I ask you all to fill your glasses and to drink a bumper to his health. [Three cheers for John Jay] Now, gentlemen, I have the extreme felicity of presenting to you our guest of the evening, Mr. John Jay. [Great applause]

RESPONSE BY THE HON. JOHN JAY.

Mr. Choate and Gentlemen: I knew it would be difficult, and I find it simply impossible, to respond fittingly to this most gracious tribute and to the touching and altogether too flattering words that have been spoken by Mr. Choate; even while I feel how largely this tribute is due to your devotion to the principles that have united us in the Union

League Club. Your kind letter, with its familiar signatures, its congratulations, its assurances of regard and affection, touched me deeply. It revived the memories and the friendships of a lifetime. It recalled the companions and fellow-students of my youth and my early associates in the law, those with whom I had taken counsel in my work abroad and at home. It came from judges who had maintained the ancient dignity of the Bench; from lawyers who had more than upheld the traditional learning, ability, and eloquence of the American Bar: from statesmen and diplomats, whose names belong to our national history—from civilians and soldiers, who have performed great services for this city, the State, and the nation. It came from those whose generous wealth, whose philanthropy, whose devotion to the interests of the poor are known to all; from those who represent our progress in science and education, our commerce, foreign and domestic, and the great enterprises, industries, and railroads which centre in this city. It came from editors and authors whose vigorous stamp has been impressed upon the press of this country and upon our literature; from those to whom the country is indebted for the progress of art, and in great measure for the Metropolitan Museum and the Bartholdi Statue. This greeting comes from the

most earnest and able advocates of reform in the national, State, and municipal service, and from those who have coöperated in Christian work and in the promotion of religious freedom. Nor am I insensible, gentlemen, to the great honor done me on this occasion by your distinguished guests, among whom I recognize one whose very presence is a benediction.

Then, gentlemen, this greeting comes from the Union League Club, with which I have been so long and intimately connected; the Club on which Lincoln leaned during the darkest hours of the rebellion; the Club whose name, Sherman told us, was familiar to his soldiers on the march to the sea; the Club which saved the loyalty of New York; which arrested the bold project of making it a rebel city and converted it into the loyal centre of devotion to the Union; the Club that stood by Acton, Kennedy, and Harvey Brown when they suppressed the riots of 1863—[great applause]—the riots so graphically described in a recent volume entitled "The Volcano beneath the City," and the writer of that volume very properly reminds us that the volcano still exists. It is the Club which raised regiments for Hancock, and the black regiments, the presentation of whose colors, and their march down Broadway, attended by the Club, undoubtedly influenced the policy of the

Government. It is the Club which received with honor Grant and Sherman, Mead and Sheridan, Hancock and Hooker, Warren and Burnside, Farragut and Dupont, Winslow and Cushing, and which greeted cordially our foreign friends, including Lord Houghton and Mr. Forster, whom you, sir, so eloquently received. Lastly, gentlemen, it is the Club which at the close of the rebellion was first and foremost to extend a cordial welcome to our opponents who frankly accepted the issue of the war. [Applause]

Remembering all these things and a thousand more, and tenderly recalling the long line of our cherished dead, more than four hundred in number, who as members of this Club shared with us the glory of our triumph in perpetuating and completing the work of the founders of the Republic, and making its declaration of man's equal right to freedom not a glittering generality but a living letter, it is impossible for me to respond as I would like to do to the flattering words so eloquently spoken, and to the historic memories so pleasantly recalled. But one thing, gentlemen, goes without saying. One thing our long association enables you to understand perfectly, however imperfect my expression of it, and that is my heartfelt appreciation of your kindness and the deep sincerity of my thanks.

You will not expect me, gentlemen, in acknowledging your congratulations on the completion of my seventieth birthday, to refer to the memorable progress of science and civilization during that period. But in this we are agreed: that the preservation of our Republic, with the abolition of slavery, constitutes the greatest event of those seventy years; far more important in historic dignity and lasting benefits to mankind, than all the changes in the map of Europe which are but temporary markings in the game of war. Of that great event, no gentleman at this table needs to be reminded, for it was accomplished with the constant aid of the Club by its policy and action, of which so many of you may say *quorum pars magna fui.* There are, however, one or two historic events which have a bearing upon the character and future of the Republican party, to which I may perhaps not improperly allude; particularly, as of the anti-slavery men, the early abolitionists of the State of New York, I am one of the last survivors. The first is that the secession movement, which ended at Appomattox, began with the nullification of 1832, when the significant medal was struck inscribed "*John C. Calhoun, First President of the Southern Confederacy.*" This fact is important as showing that the Pro-Slavery policy pursued from 1832 to 1860, the instigation of Northern mobs, the denial of

the right of speech and of the press, of petition and of debate, the annexation of Texas, the war with Mexico, and the Fugitive-Slave Act, are now explained as part and parcel of the secession scheme.

The next historic fact to which I will refer is that the anti-slavery movement, which culminated in the Republican party and saved the Republic and abolished slavery, commenced in an organized form almost simultaneously at Philadelphia in December, 1833, and the American Anti-Slavery Society then formed, which in 1839 had 1,650 auxiliary societies, based their constitution upon the constitutional principles in reference to slavery which had been declared by the Congress of 1790. Those principles that society continued to hold, although disclaimed by certain Abolitionists, notably in Massachusetts; and upon those principles, in 1854, the Republican party was founded. You may remember that in January, 1854, when the first resolution was offered in the Senate, by Dixon, for the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, a movement to arrest that breach of faith was made in this city under anti-slavery management and with the assistance of members of this Club, as some of you who are present will well remember, under the heading "No violation of plighted faith"; and a committee of one hundred was appointed to call a State convention and to invite

similar conventions in other States for the purpose of staying the extension of slavery to the Territories, and wresting the National Government from the control of slavery. A meeting was held in May in the Park, at which the principal speaker was the late Hon. Benjamin F. Butler. Delegates were appointed to the State Convention at Saratoga in August, 1854. That convention was presided over by John A. King. And in 1855, so admirably was the whole thing managed, that the Whig Convention dissolved their party and with the exception of the "Silver Greys" assisted in the convention which formed the Republican party upon precisely the same constitutional principles upon which the American Anti-Slavery Society had been founded in 1833. [Applause] The training which the voters who elected Lincoln in 1860 and in 1864 had received during the anti-slavery struggle, explains their intelligent appreciation of the war, which so many had completely mistaken ; and explains also the faith and moral independence with which they met reverses and solved the most important questions. These moral characteristics, despite the numbers who later joined them in their triumphant career, we believe mark to-day a majority of the Republican party, and particularly fit them to deal with the great questions and the un-American theories to which attention has been called by Dr. Strong, the clear and far-

sighted author of "Our Country," in connection with the increased numbers and declining character of our foreign emigrants, points which were admirably presented by the President of our Club, Mr. Depew, in his recent oration at Saratoga—and questions which should be carefully pondered by thoughtful Americans.

Now, gentlemen, touching the question of Civil Service. This Club took early and decided ground, and its statesman-like suggestions and example have told upon the people. In the canvass of Grant and Colfax the Club strengthened its influence and the Republican cause by announcing that no assistance would be given to any candidate of whose integrity and fitness they were not assured. Touching the reform in the Civil Service it should not be forgotten how much of the credit of its inauguration belongs to the Republican party. They pledged themselves to it, and it is a pledge to which earnest Republicans hold themselves the more sacredly bound from the belief that a majority of the Democratic party are not prepared to sustain on this point the honorable policy of their chief. Next to the Civil-Service Reform in importance—for it concerns the basis of our American system—is the assault upon our Common Schools, with an attempt to divide the school fund, which is being revived along the line of States, and

which this Club has emphatically denounced as a crime. Our successful resistance in the State Legislature for some ten successive years to the passage of laws to connect Church and State in our public institutions, to tax the public for sectarian teaching, and to subject the wards of the State to the guardianship of those who deny liberty of conscience, developed methods of procedure and indications of a bargain for the surrender of American principles in exchange for foreign votes, which invest the subject with the most serious importance, and call for an amendment to the Constitution. It is clear that unless we vigorously maintain American principles and American supremacy against this foreign flood, we may not always be able to save our American institutions. However formidable the problem that confronts us, we can invoke, as in the past, the all-powerful aid of the press, religious and secular; and the national pride which we have known how to arouse, will uphold the men and the party which shall stand for American principles and a yet higher civilization. Herbert Spencer has said that America may reasonably look forward to a time when it will have produced a civilization grander than any the world has known; and certainly those of us who, in the evening of our days, think at once of the past and the future, could hardly have a better assurance on

this point than is presented to-night by this distinguished assemblage, to honor the principles which we together cherish.

And now, gentlemen, with a far warmer appreciation of your kindness and confidence than I can possibly express, I sincerely thank you. [Great applause]

Mr. Choate :—Gentlemen : Close and tender as the sympathy is which binds us all to Mr. Jay, I do not believe that there is one man here present who has been in such close personal sympathy and confidential relations with him for the last thirty years as George William Curtis [applause], — especially in the old anti-slavery days, and in these hardly less important days of the great struggle of Civil-Service Reform. [Applause] They have worked shoulder and shoulder always for the good of the country ; and however they may have differed, they have always labored together for the same great patriotic end ; and therefore it is that in your name I extend a cordial welcome to Mr. Curtis and beg him to add his tribute to our distinguished guest. [Great applause]

Mr. Curtis spoke as follows :

Mr. Choate and Gentlemen :—I remember the pleasant story of Jenny Lind, the singer, that being once at the convent of Vallambrosa, near Florence,

she wanted to enter the chapel and seat herself at the organ and play and sing ; but the monks, as you may suppose, recoiled, a little affrighted at the proposition, and declared it to be impossible. "Perhaps," said she, "it might be possible if you knew who I am." "And who may the Signora be?" "I am Jenny Lind," she said; and instantly the monks bowed low, opened the doors, led her in triumph to the organ, and heard such an Ave Maria as they had not hoped to hear until they got to Paradise. Now the proposition of a great dinner at the very height of the summer solstice, I can easily imagine has caused many a good citizen, moistly meditating an escape to the mountains or the sea, to declare it to be absolutely impossible, until he asked the question which the Cadi asked of old, reversing the sex, "But who is it?" and upon hearing the answer, "It is John Jay," I do not need, gentlemen, to imagine, for I see, the same citizens eagerly crowding this table, resolved "to honor and cheer till daylight doth appear" the fidelity to principle, the moral courage, the steadfast patriotism, the unselfish public service, the well-spent life of a typical American gentleman. [Great Applause] I suppose it must be a little arduous to fill the position that our friend at this moment occupies. It must be a little trying to sit quietly at the table while friend after

friend arises to declare how much he admires and esteems you. And our friend has not the consolation that we lyceum lecturers in the old days used to have; for after hearing the President or Chairman of the Committee proclaim our virtues to the assembled audience, until our cheeks tingled to think what great men we were, he was generally apt at the end to turn around and say, "I beg your pardon! What is your name?" [Laughter] And on one occasion I remember that having delivered the last lecture in a course and taken my seat, the Chairman requested the audience to remain, as he had a few observations to make; and the observations that he made were to the effect that the Lyceum trusted that another season they would be able to welcome the same or a larger audience, because he could promise them a course of better lecturers and more entertaining lectures. [Laughter] Now there are no horrors for us in the application of that story. We know that we could not have a better guest or a better text than his character and career. A dinner on an anniversary of one's birth is in its nature a feast of reminiscence. One of my earliest recollections in the city of New York is that of a New Yorker and his constant and unquailing effort to procure from the Church a recognition of Christianity by character and not by color [great applause]; and

to extort from the courts of law the presumption at least that an innocent man was his own owner. [Applause] Gentlemen, there is nothing so insidious as prejudice. It is like a subtle poison in the air that penetrates the lungs and corrupts the very life itself. And nowhere is that prejudice more powerful than in what is called Society. Nowhere does it paint generous and gentle natures more fatally than within that charmed circle. To withstand it requires a fineness of moral fibre, a steadiness of courage, an unwearied urbanity. In the days to which I allude, that prejudice was socially supreme. It swayed society at its will. It denounced every effort to give to other men than ourselves the rights that we enjoy. And in the murky twilight of that time the absolute rectitude and lofty purpose of that young New Yorker shone like an enchanted armor. He taught younger men than himself the true aim and the true spirit of public life; and he taught them also that in the most vital and tremendous controversies, however bitter and unjust might be hostility and hatred, it was still possible to be active, alert, efficient, absolutely uncompromising, and yet not cease to be a gentleman. [Great applause] You remember in Byron's poem when the mother of the unhappy son taunted him with his deformity he looked at her bitterly and hissed out his reply, "I was born so, mother." We

reverse the picture. The young New Yorker of whom I speak, the friend of the unfortunate, the friend of the oppressed, whose flying feet brought them to his door, sure of succor, when he was reviled, not for his deformity but for his moral graces and his virtues, might well have replied with all the splendor of his grandfather's civic fire blazing from his eyes, with all the steady fidelity of his father, and the old faith of his race: "Gentlemen, it is in vain. I was born to this service; I was elected to it by the race from which I sprang." [Applause] It is but natural that the champion of personal freedom should presently be the advocate of the liberty of official service. He had seen the abolition of slavery. He naturally demanded the emancipation and the self-respect of the civil office-holder. I do not think that he was drawn to this cause by any conviction that a letter-carrier would be a more efficient public servant if he was able to tell us all about the interior of Symme's hose; nor that a man would probably be a better night-watchman if he could explain to us what had become of the lost pleiad. I suppose rather that he saw that the principles of public business in public offices were precisely the same principles that prevail in private offices; and that the practice of making the entire civil service of this country in its minor administrative branches, simply the spoils

of a victorious party, necessarily destroyed the very function of party in a republic, necessarily degraded our politics, necessarily turned every election into a mere strife for plunder, and necessarily made the boys, with all that that word implies, instead of the men, with all that that word means, the arbiters of American destiny. [Applause] I told you that we certainly could not have a better text than his character and career. But we must really respect the modesty of human nature. We must not kindle such a fire in his cheeks that he will consume before our eyes in his own blushes. [Laughter] You remember Dr. Holmes says in the person of his poet, after a certain catastrophe: "And since, I never dare to write as funny as I can." I confess, gentlemen, I do not dare to speak all the truth that I might. Perhaps our friend begins to suspect our feeling for him. Perhaps he begins to believe that his life was not ill worth living, since it had the approval of his own conscience, and the approval of such a company as his eyes see before him at this moment. No: I do not dare to tell all the truth about him, but certainly, gentlemen, I can recall to you the lines of Pope in his letter to Addison:

"Statesman yet friend of truth, of soul sincere,
In action faithful and in honor clear;
He broke no promise, served no private end;
He gained no title and he lost no friend."

[Great applause]

Mr. Choate :—Gentlemen : Mr. Jay in all these seventy years has been so closely identified with the religious organization in which he was born, that I am sure I am not asking too much of our honored guest, Bishop Potter, in inviting him to add his greeting to this loyal son of the Church. [Applause]

Bishop Potter spoke as follows :

There are reasons, gentlemen, for this introduction on the part of the Chairman, which are not known to all those within the sound of my voice this evening. It has been Mr. Choate's good or ill fortune repeatedly to be mistaken for me [laughter], and when he refers with such confidence to the sentiment of the Church, he recollects, perhaps, that incident in his career when, riding up Broadway in an omnibus one afternoon, after the toils of a long day in the court-room, he was addressed by a devout female who sat by his side, who said to him : " Dr. Potter, when do you deliver the next of that course of lectures on the Christian virtues, of which I have had so much pleasure in hearing two or three ? " It was this incident that gave me at one time great hopes for Mr. Choate. [Laughter] And in view of the recent public interest in an enterprise in which I have asked the sympathy of my fellow-citizens, I have even ventured to think of him as eligible for a can-

onry, believing that in those more confidential relations to the gentler sex which the confessional might require, nobody in my professional experience could be counted upon for more eminent success in the art of cross-examination !

He has rightly stated, gentlemen, the very cordial sympathy with which I come here to-day. The name of our distinguished guest is associated, as already we have been eloquently reminded by your Chairman and by Mr. Curtis, with an ancestry and an era in our country's history which have had not a little to do with its subsequent glory and prosperity. At the beginning of our national life, wisely shaping its policy and so largely determining its future, were illustrious men like the elder Jay, who, great as they were in intellect, were greater still in character. We are accustomed to say that they were greater in intellect than their descendants, and to speak of our own age as less distinguished for mental vigor than the age of the founders of the Republic. That statement is not, I think, borne out by the facts, nor in anywise consistent with the remarkable achievements of the generation in which we are living. Never were there more abundant illustrations of the presence, in our national history, of acute minds, far-seeing, fertile, and vigorous. The great commercial enterprises of our day afford a field for the exercise of the highest

intellectual powers, and they are more and more securing them. But they are securing them for ends that are commercial rather than political; and, more and more it is becoming true, as we are told, that our ablest men "cannot afford to go into politics."

The loss from this to statesmanship is a theme concerning which much might be said, but I refer to it now simply to allude to a danger to which no one of us can be insensible. The engagement of so many of our best minds in interests that are, after all, largely material, contributes, inevitably, to the growth of national and individual wealth, but not at all necessarily to the higher development of individual character. On the contrary, that may easily become sordid and pleasure-loving, idolatrous of Mammon, but not reverent of righteousness, nor unselfishly devoted to duty or to humanity.

It is this nobility of character and this unflinching devotion to the rights of humanity that we are here to-day to honor. In illustration of what I have said let me detain you a moment longer, in order to recall an incident in my own early experience with which our distinguished guest is very vividly associated. It is one of the proudest memories of my life that the father whose son I am, on one occasion when presiding in his own Convention in

the Diocese of Pennsylvania, descended from his seat in the chair, and appeared on the floor of the house as the advocate of the rights of colored men to seats on that floor, and made one of the most memorable speeches of his life. This incident in his career is indelibly associated in my remembrance with one of my earliest recollections of the Conventions of the Diocese of New York. It was an occasion when the rights of the same race were in question upon that floor, and when, sitting there as a young man, the only voice which I can now recall as unequivocally lifted on that occasion in their behalf was the voice of him in whose honor we are assembled to-night. [Great applause] I shall never forget that scene, in which I am constrained to say the honors were not with the ecclesiastics who took part in it. The good-breeding, the absolute self-control, the unanswerable argument, the deference for rightful authority, and, above all, the severe and unflinching courage on that occasion were largely on one side. [Applause] And if I could have wavered in allegiance to principles which were bred in my bone, and which were part of my nature, that allegiance would have been recalled and affirmed and confirmed beyond question by the magnificent courage, the splendid and unanswerable arguments, which I that day saw and heard. [Applause] The influ-

ence of such a character can never be lost. In days when it is so easy for one to drift with any tide, so hard to resist a popular current, so unwelcome a task to speak a fearless word, the name of John Jay will always shine preëminent as an illustration of virtues on which the very foundations of the Republic must depend. [Applause]

There are three strains, gentlemen, which have mingled in the greatness of New York. There is that Dutch strain, from whose loins some of us here have come. There is that English strain, with its stalwart virtues, from which others of us have sprung. And there is that Huguenot strain which flows in the veins of our distinguished guest, and which has found in his life and services such conspicuous illustrations. Who of us will ever forget that immortal picture of Millet's, which represents the Huguenot lovers; the struggle between inclination and duty; the girl trying to tie the handkerchief around her lover's arm, which, if worn, will save his life; and that firm, persistent, gentle refusal to compromise duty even at the calling of love! [Applause] Surely under that picture there ought to have been written these lines:

> "I could not love thee half so well
> Loved I not honor more."

And he who is here to-night, who in his unselfish

devotion to his duty, in his manly consecration of himself to every noble though unpopular cause, has so often illustrated those lines, may have written above his portrait, when we come to hang it in these halls, that whatever love he has given to kindred and friend, the supreme devotion of his life has been given to duty and to honor. [Applause] God bless his good gray head, and give him many children, and children's children, not only in name but in spirit! [Great applause]

Mr. Choate:—Gentlemen: Mr. Evarts, although not quite as old as Mr. Jay, claims to have passed his seventieth birthday, albeit the event has failed to attract the sensitive public eye and ear. He and Mr. Jay studied law together, and ever since they have travelled side by side in their honored and prosperous lives. They have divided public honors and private applause; and always they have been true to one another. I call upon Mr. Evarts to address you. [Great applause]

Mr. Evarts spoke as follows:

When Mr. Choate did me the honor to ask me to join in the invitation to Mr. Jay, and I read the well-expressed, the kind and truthful phrases, I told him that I could not sign it because, in one point, it was not true. He had asked our friend to meet us at dinner

on his seventieth birthday, and thus had left out of the count the day that he was born. I, adhering to the rectitude of these minor moralities, have insisted that I had passed my seventieth birthday, though I was but sixty-nine years old.

Mr. Jay and I were students together, under an excellent master. When I came here from the Law School at Cambridge, and entered Mr. Lord's office, I found there, among his students, either just ready to be admitted to the Bar or just admitted and about to leave the office, this gentleman, our friend. He was already married; and I thought how fortunate I had been in selecting for a forum of my professional career, one in which one of the greatest rewards of life might be reaped, even before admission to the Bar. From this you might suppose that we were near of an age; but really we seem to be of two different generations, for his grandchildren and my children were schoolmates at St. Paul's, and in College. So much for an early start in married life!

I must recognize, as Mr. Choate has, the earlier and not less grateful interests which I found in Mr. Jay's reception of me, a stranger, coming here, not of the home or of the settled and prominent opinions then existing here, but a New Englander, the first of my lineage that had ever lived out of the borders of New England. I found this my future friend, set-

tled already in his domestic affections, and surrounded by all the attractions which culture and wealth and good fame in family could surround him with; and from that moment until now, I think Mr. Jay will warrant me in saying there has been no moment either at home or abroad, either in politics or in the movements of society, that we have not been boys together from that time to this. [Applause]

One may readily be permitted to gain some distinction for himself to-night, by the associations that he can justify between himself and our honored guest. The great Chief Justice, Mr. Jay's grandfather, and my grandfather were together in the government under General Washington, one in the Senate and one presiding over the justice of the country; and it is a just tie of agreeable association between us that thus now we stand together, not broken in years, and I trust not on my part as (certainly not on his) in repute; with the same purpose in our lives of obedience to the Constitution and the laws and the integrity of the nation and the amplification of its authority and its power. We have not seen in our generation any permanent harm done to these great institutions. We still possess an unmutilated territory and an uncorrupted Constitution, which the ancestry of the present generation joined their labors together to knit in such firm texture that no vicissi-

tudes of human affairs could shake them asunder. [Applause] But I had even a closer association; for though in no part was there any affinity or consanguinity, yet my elder brother had received from my parents, as a name standing for public-spirited and pious traits, for unity of personal purity and of public power and strength, no name of kindred upon either side, but the name of John Jay. [Applause] And thus, as Mr. Jay perhaps would remember, that in his first introduction and his kind acceptance of my companionship, he referred to that as within his and his family's remembrance, that my father and mother had given the name of John Jay to their elder son. [Applause] Now, when two young men have grown, not old [laughter] but older together, year by year, in the same sphere, in the same paths of public service and of public relations, and then in all the activities and in all the vicissitudes that attend so many who launch upon the stormy sea of this great city, this great State, this great nation, it is impossible that we can feel otherwise than that, in the tapestry of our lives, the conciliated threads and colors are united so that we seem framed together into what is the working of the lives of the time in which we live. But I have known Mr. Jay as a young lawyer, as an efficient, as a prominent, as a faithful actor in all that moved the

minds, addressed the consciences, brought out the character of our contemporaries as we went on together. I do not know, Mr. Jay, but I am quite sure in saying that there is no one present in this company that can beat, for so long a period, the parallel lines of our lives. [Applause] Indeed I might say that outside of this company, and in this great community of the city and of the State, as we date thus from our first step out of the province of education into the province of active life, you can probably name no one that can go further back and yet has held out as long side by side with you as myself. [Applause]

I had the good fortune to meet Mr. Jay abroad under circumstances of great interest to the contests that were going on as the sequel of the close of our war. I had not the good pleasure to find him, while I was connected with the Government at Washington, still in the diplomatic service, but I knew all the while that he was fulfilling his missions abroad, and all the while afterwards, as I had occasion to consult the records of his correspondence, that in every thing there, both of a public nature and in the more intimate and personal integrity, to keep untarnished our honor from the attacks made upon it there, Mr. Jay was, in the Court of Austria, on the high scene of diplomatic regulation and control of affairs there, as

well as in the conduct of private relations, the same fearless, the same upright, and the same successful man in his conduct of affairs. [Great applause]

Now, gentlemen, we are together with no occasion on the part of any of us but to speak within just bounds, and to shade, if there be need to shade, any of the features or the marks of the career of our guest. And if there be a continuous uniformity in our applause, it is simply that if our applause should cease or our applause should fail, it would be not his fault, but ours that we did not continue to appreciate him. [Applause] And now, as we are thus enjoying this hospitality, which we extend to our guest, and thus deriving a lustre from his repute and our appreciation of it, am I not right in saying that there is no greater wealth in human life than a well-maintained good fame, from the beginning to the end, on a large and open theatre of observation, when the virtues have grown and strengthened, not under shelter, but by triumph over temptation? What is stronger than that sound proposition of Plautus: "*Ego, si bonam famam mihi servasso, sat ero dives*"! And that is the wealth of a life crowned in honor and in munificence to human needs. If riches in the lesser sense has monopolized too much the name of wealth, yet in wealth in this largest significance—that is the wealth in which such fame as that of Mr. Jay

may well be a cause of congratulation to himself, then he is indeed rich enough. [Great applause]

There is one gentleman present who can tell us how Mr. Jay served those lucrative clients of his in early times ; one who was his partner in the practice of the law for nearly a score of years ; and I call upon Mr. Charles E. Whitehead to say a few words. [Applause]

Mr. Whitehead spoke as follows :

Mr. Chairman, I think it was Lamb who said there were three kinds of invitations to a dinner, and three kinds of guests who came. One came because he was invited ; the other, because he did not dare to stay away ; and the third, because he loved to come. In looking around these tables I think we can honestly say there is not a man here but came under the third class. We love to come because we are life-long friends of the guest we seek to honor ; and we strive to honor the virtues and the character and the principles that his life enunciates. It was over a third of a century ago, I think on a rainy morning, that I came into the office of Jay & Field, and sought to get a clerkship. I was accepted at a salary of two dollars and a half a week. Aftewards I became a partner in that

firm. If I remember rightly the emoluments of the firm were not large. Indeed, I think, as far as emoluments were concerned, I would have done better to have remained a clerk. [Laughter] Not that we did not have good clients and honorable ones, but a great many dusky clients came there for whom we did a great deal of work, and who departed upon that narrow path latterly much worn by their white brethren that leads to Canada, and the only fee they left behind was gratitude. Indeed, we generally paid our clients to go. I remember many occasions which, if we had time, and the night was not far spent, I could speak of; of this man and the other man, all fugitives for liberty who unerringly found their way to our office; but particularly my memory serves me best of one gentleman with a charcoal skin and a yellow eye who was taken before the then United States Commissioner. The only person who we could find who was willing to assist in the argument was Mr. Joseph L. White, all honor to his name, and he took part in it. I say the only person because, in looking around for assistance at that time, at the Bar, there were not three men that we could rely upon to aid in such a case as that, when we had no money to pay, and nothing but obloquy to be heaped upon the person who acted for the colored man. We tried that cause for a day,

and earnestly insisted upon putting in evidence—evidence upon the fact that the man, brought here *in transitu* for Texas, by being brought here had his liberty ; and we sought to give evidence to show that he was voluntarily brought here by his master ; and the evidence lasted, as we hoped it would, until a late hour in the evening, and the United States Commissioner adjourned the case over until the next morning. The next morning we came into court, Mr. Jay, with that gentleness of manner and sweetness of voice which you all remember, insisted that before any further evidence should be taken the negro who was the subject of dispute should be brought before the Court, because every man was entitled to be in court when evidence was given involving his life or his liberty. There was a sending for the marshal, and a searching around and whispering, and finally it was announced that the negro had fled the city. Mr. Jay insisted that the owner of the slave had spirited him away to the South. On the other side, and I think, with better show of reason, they insisted that he had gone into Westchester County, somewhere near the Jay Homestead, and had spent the night there, and at that time was travelling north to Canada. [Laughter] You can imagine, with a client in that position, how small the emoluments that came to myself. No

money but lots of gratitude, and the senior partner took all of that. But right straight along by that class of cases was developed the proposition that a negro man had rights which in a free country the law would compel us to respect, and at the same time and on every side, from nearly every one came expressions of hostility and anger, so that the advocate in passing in and out of the United States Court met nothing but taunt. And so year after year went on that implacable fight ; our guest with a few men here in the city of New York against all public opinion, against enactments in Congress, against the literature of the South which was carried through the North, against personal letters sent to the members of the firm and the clerks in their employ,—all the time went on that fight to aid the slave and bring public opinion to the succor of the slave in his effort to escape. That fight was carried on not only there, but in the clubs and before that venerable and dignified body of the Church, which is represented here to-night by one of its most eloquent bishops.

I recollect being present at a meeting of the Diocese which was held in New York, where our guest to-night could not get the ordinary hearing of a gentleman, on his application to have a resolution passed by the Church recommending that the parishes of the city of New York should give their voice against

slavery being brought into the State of New York. And so it went on from year to year in the forum, at the hustings, in school and agricultural meeting, by press and by pamphlet, his voice was ever foremost for freedom, until, I think we will agree, the tide of public opinion has somewhat changed. And if there is any one thing which impresses itself upon my mind, for which we ought to render honor to the guest that we come to meet to-night, it is that at the time when all the opinion of this country was strongly, ardently, and bitterly arrayed against the position he occupied, without fear or favor, without being "an orator, as Brutus was," yet with a stern sense of right and a persistency which nothing could baffle, he went on in Church and State, in social life and at the Bar, wherever his name or his family name could give force, with his person and with his purse, and he helped the fugitive, and he helped the cause which ultimately came to be the great centre of politics in this country. [Applause] Now, it is easy for us here, under this bright light, to advocate those doctrines, but some of us forget how hard it was at the beginning of the century. Perhaps some of you may at some time have tried at a dinner to give three cheers, with a great hurrah, the first hurrah goes dead, and the second hurrah less loud, and finally you sit down abashed. But he, during all that time,

gave those three hurrahs with unabated force. There was never any time that he did not go through the whole three, no matter who responded, and he *never* sat down. [Applause] In the life of Deveneau, I think it is, he tells of having been to the Society Islands, and mentioning to a chief that at the former island that he had visited he had had his brother at dinner. Said the chief: "Was he good? I wish I had been there." [Laughter] I think we somewhat feel in that way; we have had our brother and he is good. I do not think that our guest would like a residence in the Society Islands. We all feel a sense of pleasure in having been here to-night, and we all feel the sense of giving a cordial handshake of kindliness and sympathy to a man who has been with us so many years, showing our love and affection, without any word for the press and the applauding public, but with a universal expression of kindliness and cordiality. It goes a little further with me. I was a young man without friends or acquaintances here in New York when I came into his office; and I speak, not only for myself, but for every other clerk in his office, some of whom are judges now, and some of whom occupy active places in society, of the cordial sympathy that went out from him, and the hospitality of his house, which was never stinted and which was universal, to the smallest boy in his office, and was a

pledge of affection and an encouragement in life, which has always been an example for me in my treatment of boys in my office; and I always look upon it with a tender sympathy, not only for him, but for his wife and his family; and a love which goes on unabated, and which will never cease while I have the power of expression. [Great applause]

Mr. Choate:—Gentlemen: We must not punish Mr. Jay too severely for being so good. We must remember that the hairs of his white head are all numbered. We want him to live on to his eightieth and ninetieth birthday, although perhaps we shall have to warn him that this mode of celebrating them must not be taken in precedent. But I am sure that you would not forgive me for bringing these festivities to a close without calling upon the gentleman who now fills in this Club the chair which Mr. Jay so honored and illustrated. I call upon our friend, Mr. Chauncey M. Depew. [Great applause]

Mr. Depew spoke as follows:

At one o'clock this morning, at their Anniversary Banquet, the Veterans of the Army of the Potomac had adjourned, and the bummers had taken possession, when I left that interesting assemblage to come here. It is a contrast. Though the hour is ap-

proaching that at which I departed from Saratoga last night, the guests apparently are not the same; and yet I came on purpose to be present here, not to speak, for I am not on the programme, but to pay my respects to Mr. Jay. I don't know why it was that Mr. Choate should have begun these exercises by abusing me, and ended them by calling me up. [Laughter] He alluded to the fact that his fees connected with the railroad over which I preside have not been satisfactory. [Laughter] There has been no dispute in the directory of that corporation in regard to those fees; and the statement has not yet been made to the stockholders, that the reduction of our dividend from eight to four per cent. has been on that account. [Great laughter] When Choate came to me with this paper, I told him I signed it with great cheerfulness, and thought it was a very happy thing to do. But Choate says: "I have a greater and a larger meaning in this than a mere compliment to Mr. Jay. You know I never do any thing without a fee. [Laughter] I want to establish the precedent, that every ex-President of this Club, when he reaches seventy years of age, shall be given a banquet. [Laughter] Evarts will get one next year, and that goes into the firm. [Laughter] Jack Schultz ought to have had one eight or ten years ago. [Laughter] We will count back and include

him in. The next year I will come in. [Great laughter] Twenty-five or thirty years from now you will have one. [Great laughter] Of course I signed the paper. Now the most eminent pathologists, or medical men, have said that a man can live to almost any period if he only has an object in getting there. The medical fraternity of England say, that Gladstone would have died years ago except that he had a well-defined purpose in living; and that he would have died two years ago if he had not determined first to liberate Ireland and establish Home Rule; and that may carry him on a good many years. The medical faculty of Germany gave up Bismarck; but although he fixed the limit of his own life at a period now past, his object was not accomplished, and he is going on four or five years more. The Emperor of Germany had a great mission to carry out thirty-five years ago, which he said he would do in four or five years. It is not done yet, and he has vigorously entered his ninety-second year. And so every ex-President of this Club has an opportunity to live to be seventy years of age now that he is sure of this dinner; and every member of the Association who is not President, hopes to be, and that carries him along. [Great laughter] The life-insurance agents are lurking about our door-ways all the while, because they understand this perfectly.

I have a special object in being here, which cannot be shared by any of the rest of you. Most of you hail from New England. A New England man cannot properly appreciate Mr. Jay. I hear so much from New England men about New England, that I am inclined to think that they deem it necessary on all public occasions to make an apology for the fact that they left New England. [Laughter] But I have the honor to have been born in the same County in this State with Mr. Jay. His father and mine were born there; and my grandfather, and great-grandfather; and for four generations my ancestors and now myself have been rendering reverence, honor, and love to three generations of Jays. Westchester County had more to do of historical significance relating to the formation of this Republic and its liberties, than many States, and all the other Counties of New York put together. It contributed Governeur Morris, with all his genius for affairs, and his superb accomplishments; but it gave a greater man than Governeur Morris, John Jay. [Great applause] By his articles in the *Federalist* he created the sentiment which formed the loosely united colonies into a Republic, and a hundred years afterwards put down the rebellion and established forever that this is not a confederacy of independent States, but a nation. [Applause] By his learning, his constructive talents,

and spotless purity he, as its first Chief Justice, gave to our highest judicial tribunal a dignity and character which have secured for it the profoundest confidence of our first and second century. [Applause]

I was riding yesterday around Saratoga Springs with General Sherman. We called at the house of a friend, and instantly the General's attention was occupied by a beautiful girl. [Laughter] I have often noticed that it is the peculiarity of very eminent men, seventy years of age, that whenever the opportunity occurs their attention is occupied by a beautiful girl. [Laughter] He said to her: "My dear young lady, if I could go back to your time of life and start once more with all your fresh, bright and hopeful career, I would sacrifice all I am and have done, and take my chances again." I replied: "General, there is no man living who can share with you that sentiment. No one who has achieved what you have, who has reached the borders of seventy years, and has behind him a glorious career which is part of the history of his country, would be permitted by his countrymen to blot it out and begin life again. Such a record is treasured among the best things we own and cherish and desire to transmit to our descendants." [Applause]

We would not have John Jay bury his past and be restored to youth to try once more his fortunes. We

know that he would pass an honorable and useful life, but in five hundred years the opportunity might not occur again for him to render such an incalculable service to humanity. It is one of the glories of our time that his character and courage protected the poor and helpless against prejudice and passion, and that he lived to see the victory of that liberty to which he had devoted his talents and his fortune. [Great applause] All of us his friends and proud to be so numbered, we stand about him to-night paying in our individual ways, and according to our several relations, our heartfelt tributes. We honor him for his unselfish devotion to a noble but unpopular cause, for his public services, for his work in this Club, and we love and revere him as a man. [Great applause]

Mr. Choate :—Now, gentlemen, I propose that we end as we began, by drinking the health of our eminent guest ; and after that what remains of Mr. Jay will be on exhibition at the door for you all to shake hands with him as you pass from the hall.

LETTERS.

LETTERS.

FROM THE RT. REV. DR. A. CLEVELAND COXE, BISHOP OF WESTERN NEW YORK.

BUFFALO, June 15, 1887.

DEAR SIR:—It is truly a grievous pain to me to find myself unable to join you and other friends of Mr. Jay, at the banquet in his honor, of the 24th inst. You say well that "a long and unbroken friendship" (it dates from 1833) has subsisted between us; and few are as able as I am to testify, from intimate associations, to the unsullied purity of his life, from his earliest years until now, when his public services are recognized and all unite to do him honor. Permit a friend, who is thus denied the privilege of saying something at your festive gathering, to pay a brief tribute to the character of Mr. Jay, without further reference to the private worth which has endeared him to the circle of those who best know him in his home, at his fireside, and his hospitable board. Inheriting the name and the virtues of one of the purest and most eminent of those who shared the confidence of Washington, and who, with him laid the foundations of the republic on the rock of Christian civilization, he has seemed to me to illustrate the typical American, as those fathers of our constitution designed the true American to be. Devoted unselfishly to the public good; seeking no place in the public service, but accepting public duties at the

call of the magistrate; maintaining his convictions when they were unpopular, and seeking no rewards when the tide turned and meaner men found it convenient to embrace them; with a lofty independence still contending with abuse and fearlessly enjoining the perils of the nation as he viewed them in the light of history and the experience of states; who can fail to feel that his example is a lesson to his countrymen? Differ they may with such a man, but all must agree that in the class of men of which he is a type, their very differences are the breath of life to legislation, and the animation of legislative councils in a free republic.

What dignity, what character would be imparted to our laws, were they always the product of free debate among enlightened lovers of their country and incorruptible public servants!

Regard this letter as a private one, *or otherwise*, as you please. The month of June is the month of all the year in which I am least able to be absent from my diocese; it is filled with school and college anniversaries, in addition to my ordinary routine of work, and the commencement of Hobart College, in particular, at which I am required to be present, fills up the whole week, in which the birthday of my honored friend is to be celebrated.

It is thus that I am "ruled out" and deprived of what would otherwise afford me the highest satisfaction. Let me thank you for your invitation, and wish you all the enjoyment of which I am deprived, in paying merited honors to Mr. Jay.

Faithfully yours,

A. CLEVELAND COXE,
Bp. of W. New York.

The Hon. JOSEPH H. CHOATE, LL.D.

FROM THE REV. DR. HOBART.

FISHKILL, 10 June, 1887.

MY DEAR SIR:—Were I not physically unable to be present, I would gladly accept your courteous invitation on behalf of the gentlemen who are to entertain Mr. Jay on the 24th inst., to be one of their guests on that occasion. Among those then present there will be many as well or better fitted than I am to judge how suitable is such an expression of respect and esteem for a man who has fulfilled threescore years and ten of active life, in prominent positions "among his own people," with marked ability, recognized usefulness, and unimpeached integrity. It is a position not easily won or held, and they honor themselves who honor him who has achieved it.

My tribute, however, on this occasion, which strong feeling prompts me to render, is singular, in this respect; it is that of a personal friendship for Mr. Jay which five and fifty years of close intimacy have cemented, and on the fair surface of which there is not a stain or flaw for which he is answerable. There is but one other person who can join me in saying this of our friend. Rarely, indeed, can such witness be found to any man, nor would it under ordinary circumstances form part of a public testimonial. Yet it illustrates our friend's character with a distinctive light, without which it cannot be seen in its full proportions, and that could be respected only from such a quarter.

Greatly regretting my enforced absence, and acknowledging again the kind courtesy of your invitation,

I am most sincerely yours,

J. H. HOBART.

Mr. JOS. H. CHOATE.

FROM COL. LE GRAND B. CANNON.

THE UNION LEAGUE CLUB, June 23d.

MY DEAR SIR:—I very greatly regret that domestic affairs obliging me to leave the city will deprive me of the pleasure of attending the dinner to Mr. Jay to-morrow evening.

For more than forty years I have enjoyed Mr. Jay's personal friendship, and prize the memories of our social relations as among the most valued of my life; but there are higher qualities which his public life illustrates, which have won at home and abroad as wide a confidence and esteem as his name is known and honored. His life exhibits the possibility of attainment under our political system, as the most elevated type of American citizenship.

It has been my further privilege to know Mr. Jay intimately in public affairs, and to be instructed and improved by the force of his example; his well-ordered mind might yield on a point of opinion, but his sterling integrity never permitted him to compromise with wrong. Whether abroad or at home, the honor of the nation—the enforcement of the law—the advance of our political system—the integrity of our civil service found in him an intelligent and earnest advocate, and a willingness to work for their accomplishment. A singular instance of his nice observance of duties common to us all, and which it is to be deplored is practised by so few.

It is rare that one who has reached the allotted age of man is permitted to present such a record, and I beg you to assure Mr. Jay that I feel most gratified for the occasion and opportunity of thus paying a just tribute, founded on affection and the highest esteem. Yours very cordially,

LE G. B. CANNON.

JOSEPH H. CHOATE, Esq.

FROM HON. WM. ALLEN BUTLER.

ROUND OAK, YONKERS, June 23, 1887.

MY DEAR MR. CHOATE:—I regret very much that absence from the city will prevent my being at the dinner to Mr. Jay to-morrow night. He is high up on the roll of honor with the men who stood against the aggressions of the Sectional Slave Power when resistance was unpopular and apparently futile, and in this day of established national unity and freedom, which he saw afar off and whose blessings he has helped to secure, we do well to mark his arrival at the age of threescore years and ten by such a tribute as will be paid to him at the Union League Club, and to ensure its complete success by placing the arrangements in charge of a Committee of which you are the Chairman.

Yours sincerely,

WM. ALLEN BUTLER.

JOSEPH H. CHOATE, Esq.,

Chairman.

John Jay, a good brave man whose locks are white
With frost of many winters; on his brow
Peace smiling sits, and thought with human love;
And in his deep blue eye, the quiet self-respect
That upright living yields the pure in heart.

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BOOKBINDING
Granville, Pa.
Jan. Feb. 1989